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By the REV. PROFESSOR ALEXANDER BALMAIN BRUCE,
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THE subject of this sketch is a native of Aberdeen. He received his early education in the grammar school there under the famous Rector Melvin and Mr. Geddes (now Principal Sir William Geddes, of Aberdeen University), and took his arts course in the university of his native city. He studied theology first in the Free Church College in Aberdeen, then in Germany, chiefly at Erlangen, under such well-known teachers as Delitzsch, von Hofmann, and Thomasius. While studying theology he acted for three years as assistant professor of Greek in the University of Aberdeen; he held for a similar period the post of examiner in classics for the same university. He became in 1865 the minister of the Free Church in Barry, Forfarshire, a parish which stretches along the shore of the German Ocean just where the River Tay pours its waters into it. He was a diligent pastor, but also a hard student, and a frequent contributor to the various theological magazines, during the Barry period, in which time also he executed several important translations for the Ante-Nicene Library. In 1870 he offered himself as a candidate for the chair of Hebrew in the Free Church College, Aberdeen, he and the famous William Robertson Smith being the two men in the run, Smith being the successful candidate. At length his professorial ambition was crowned with success by his appointment in 1876 to the chair of systematic theology in the Aberdeen Free College, which he still occupies.

Dr. Salmond is before all things a *scholar*, with a scholar's instincts, training, and habits; fond of research, devoted to books, given to authorship and editorship, and careful and accu-

rate in all literary work. His admirers might not claim for him that he is in speech or written style a magnetic personality, but they may confidently affirm that he is entitled to and always actually commands respect and implicit confidence, as one who knows thoroughly well what he is talking about. He is a genius, if there be truth in Carlyle's definition of genius as consisting in the art of *taking pains*.

Among the larger contributions made by Dr. Salmond to theological literature may be mentioned his commentary on 1 and 2 Peter in Schaff's *Popular Commentary*. But his most important work is that which was published last year on *The Christian Doctrine of Immortality*. The basis, or nucleus, of this valuable treatise was a series of lectures delivered some years ago on the "Cunningham Foundation," being the thirteenth course since the establishment of this lectureship in honor of the first principal of the New College, Edinburgh. With few exceptions the literary products of this foundation have not been signally successful. Dr. Salmond's book is one of the exceptions, as will be seen when it is mentioned that though scarcely a year has passed since it was published it is about to go into a second edition, notwithstanding that it is a large and costly work of nearly 700 pages. Its success is due partly to the interest felt by many in its solemn theme, but largely to this, that readers find in it a competent and weighty utterance on that theme. It is undoubtedly an important contribution to the literature of its subject, which will certainly take a prominent place as a standard theological treatise. Though forbiddingly large it is by no means a heavy book to read. The style is simple, direct, to the point, and the matter invariably interesting. Besides being interesting it is weighty, because it is obviously the ripe result of much patient research and hard thinking carried on from the time of the preparation of the Cunningham lectures till the date of publication. The work has both historical and exegetical interest. The comparative method of handling the theme is employed, which gives scope for an account of the thoughts on the life beyond entertained by the leading peoples of antiquity. Perhaps the most



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valuable portion of the book is the exposition of our Lord's teaching on the subject. The conclusions come to on this vital topic may disappoint those who cherish and advocate the larger hope, but no one can complain of the tone in which the discussion is conducted, which is at once reverent, considerate, and temperate. In his theological attitude Dr. Salmond is on the whole more conservative than many of his Scottish contemporaries and comrades, but he knows nothing of the bigotry and intolerance of conservatism, or of the *odium theologicum*. His temper is calm and passionless, and his habit of mind scientific rather than dogmatic. Men of all schools, new and old, may read his work on immortality without fear of offense, and with good hope of theological instruction and spiritual benefit.

Besides writing this one great book Dr. Salmond has published from time to time some useful little books meant for the instruction of young people in the principles of religion. They form part of a series of publications issued by the Welfare of Youth and Guild committees of the Free Church with which he has been long and prominently associated. The books are called *Primers*. Those of Dr. Salmond are on *The Life of the Apostle Peter*, *The Life of Christ*, *The Shorter Catechism*, *The Sabbath*, *The Parables of Our Lord*. A Christian scholar will not regret the time he has spent in preparing elementary treatises on such themes.

Dr. Salmond has been prominent not only as an author, but also as an *editor*. He has acted as an editor in three different connections: (1) In the preparation of the above mentioned series of *Primers*; (2) in connection with the *International Theological Library*, published by Messrs. Clark, of Edinburgh, and Messrs. Scribner's Sons, New York (Professor Briggs, of Union Theological Seminary, being associated with Dr. Salmond in the work of editorship); and (3) in connection with the now well-known and highly valued *Critical Review*. This quarterly magazine devoted to the careful reviewing of theological literature is Professor Salmond's own child. He projected it, started it, worked it up, till now it is established as an organ of intelligent and trustworthy opinion on the worth of the contributions

to theological literature which make their appearance from time to time. It deserves the support of all professional theologians and of all theological seminaries. There is nothing better of its kind known to me.

Dr. Salmond is a *man of affairs* as well as a man of letters. It would be difficult to say which is the stronger, the passion for business or the passion for study. School boards of presbyterial meetings have taken up much of his time and attention during the years of his professorate, time which some might be inclined to think might easily have been better spent. The combination exhibited in his character and career is neither common nor easy. The ecclesiastic often kills the scholar, and the scholar the ecclesiastic. Many of our best-known students are hardly ever seen in church courts, and some of our most conspicuous ecclesiastics have belied the promise of fruitful authorship given in their early years. Salmond is an exception. He likes his study and he likes his presbytery, and is a leader there. This versatility is interesting and creditable. It is advantageous to health and the fulness of life. One cannot study all the day long, and the best recreation, or at least the only one available for some, is change of work. The clergyman who is a hard student finds relief from mental weariness in a couple of hours spent in pastoral visits among his people, and is in the mood to discover human interest in very commonplace people. Even so the scholar, after working some five or six hours among his books, can bring into play a different set of mental powers among his fellow presbyters, and find both recreation and amusement in the most humdrum presbyterial procedure. Nothing is more dreary than church courts, if what goes on there forms the staple of one's existence. I would not for anything be a presbytery clerk, though some good men I know occupy the dismal post. But it is quite a different affair if you use your presbytery as you use a novel, simply as the means of unbending the mental bow. I owe an apology to my ecclesiastical superior for so disrespectful a suggestion, but I mean no disrespect. I acknowledge that presbyteries have higher, nobler uses than to serve as an

amusement to an overworked brain. I am sure Dr. Salmond does not look on them in any such low light. He regards them as opportunities of usefulness, and with commendable public spirit takes advantage of them as such. And that he has done good service in an ecclesiastical capacity all who know him will readily own.

To live, move, and have one's being wholly in ecclesiasticism were not merely to lose time but almost one's soul. There is no fear of Salmond committing this sin. His passion for study and for authorship is too intense. More good books may be expected from him, probably ere long one in connection with both the international series now in course of publication. He will make his mark both in New Testament exegesis and in New Testament theology. And he may be trusted to work in these departments along the lines of modern biblical criticism and historical interpretation. He is not so decidedly modern in his type as Professor Briggs, with whom he is associated in editorial work. Perhaps one should rather say he is a man with a more cautious nature, with less self-consciousness and more scientific objectivity than his brother editor. Their critical views are probably much the same, but there is no chance of the Aberdonian divine ever figuring as the hero of a heresy hunt. He may say the same things about inerrancy and such like topics, and people will assume that it is all right. This may be a defect as well as a merit in his character. Whether defect or merit it is a fact. Salmond is orthodox in temper and in reputation, and he may help to gain currency for views which when uttered by other men raise a hue and cry.

The four men whom I have most imperfectly placed before readers of the BIBLICAL WORLD in these brief sketches are men of whom the Free Church, not to say Scotland, has reason to be proud. They do credit to their denomination and to their country. They are entirely different from one another in physical and in mental characteristics. No one could mistake the one for the other in face, in figure, in manner, or in intel-

lectual idiosyncrasy; and of course varying estimates might be formed of their comparative worth by different men. But no one would ever think of undervaluing any one of them, or of grudging them a place among Scotland's superior personalities. I feel an honest satisfaction in being privileged to introduce them to the more intimate acquaintance of American brethren. I have endeavored to do so in a spirit of sincerity, not indulging in indiscriminate laudation, but I hope also abstaining from ungenerous criticism. I know them all four well, and I can honestly say that they are capable men, hard workers, and right good fellows, every one of them.